~~Proclamation~~

~~1656, 8 March~~

By the Mayor.

(T,596)

WHereas by oft and ſad experience I find that the great and holy name of God in the breach of the Sabbath is much prophaned, and the Goſpel of Chriſt highly ſcandalized by multitudes of looſe, vaine and idle perſons, who Walk in More-fields and the fields neere unto it, in a Wandring and idle manner, and oft times reſort to the tipling houſes thereabouts, on the Sabbath day, to the high diſhonour and provocation of Almighty God: the breach of many good Lawes, and oft times of the Peace and good Government of this City and places adjacent, and conſidering it to be my duty to God and the ſoules of ſuch poore creatures, to doe my uttermoſt in preventing ſo many great Evils as are conceived in and brought forth from ſuch a Wombe of ſin as this is, Which ſeemes to mee to be the Divels neſt Wherein he ſitteth and hatches a ſucceſſion of looſe and carnall families, ſeaſoning youth With ſuch a Wicked liberty that When they come to be heads of families, they and their families Walk in the ſame paths, as if the keeping of a Sabbath to the Lord Were no more but to lend the eare for a little time to the ſound of the Goſpel, and preſently after to tempt the tempter by various objects, With vaine and ſinfull Company and converſe, to ſteale the good Word of God out of their hearts and heads. Theſe are therefore in the name of his Highneſs the Lord Protector of the Common-Wealth of England, Scotland and Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging, to Will and require you to keepe or cauſe to be kept a good and ſufficient Watch on every Sabbath day, at every gate and paſſage in your Ward that leads to the places aforeſaid, and the ſame gates both great and ſmall to keep ſhut and not to ſuffer any to go out thereat from this City, Without giving a good account of the neceſſary occaſions thereof to the Conſtable, Who is hereby required to attend and doe his duty accordingly, and the Supervisors in their reſpective places, are hereby deſired ſome of them each Sabbath day to ſee to the due obſervation hereof, and in ſpeciall in the afternoones, and that no young or looſe Perſons be admitted to goe out of the City aforeſaid, except upon manifeſt and neceſſary occaſions, and indeed that no perſon be admitted except the Work they goe about ſhall be found to be agreeable to the holy obſervance of the Sabbath day; And that this Watch be kept every Sabbath untill ſunſet: And the Miniſters of every Pariſh and Congregation Within London and the liberties thereof, are hereby deſired to a frequent exhortation and direction of their people unto a ſtrict and due keeping holy of the Sabbath day, and that all heads of families and Parents of children be enjoyned according to the Lawes of God and man to keepe in their Children and ſervants from ſuch Wandrings on the dayes aforeſaid, and be exhorted to improve that Whole day to the benefit of the ſoules of themſelves and families, keeping themſelves and families retyred in their own houſes, and there endeavour to fixe upon their hearts by meditation and repetition, What they have received from the Lord in his Word preached, and to bedew that good ſeed With the prayers of faith, that ſo it may by a bleſſing from heaven bring forth an hundred fold, to Gods glory and the advantage of their precious and eternall ſoules, Againſt all Which the Divell is a grand and ſubtill enemy, and therefore tempts and drawes to the former looſe Converſation on that bleſſed day for ſoule-advantage. And if any Parent, Maſter or Miſtris ſhall have cauſe to complaine that after good example and exhortation accompanied With commands, they cannot keepe their Children and Servants to a due obedience of the Lawes before expreſſed, they are hereby required to bring all ſuch offenders before mee or ſome other of the Juſtices of the peace Within this City of London, Where they ſhall be dealt Withall according to their merits and the due courſe of Law. And it is hereby required that the ſame care be taken to prevent the ſtreets and lanes of this City from all manner of profanation of the Sabbath day, and to theſe ends the Miniſters of each Pariſh are enjoyned ſome one Sabbath day before the firſt of May next, to read in their Publick Congregations, the Lawes to that purpoſe herewith ſent them, and at ſuch other times as they may judge meet, and all Perſons Who by Law or Conſcience are obliged to ſee the due obſervation of this Precept, are hereby required to do their duties herein.

Dated the 18 of *March*, 1656.

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Broadsides,
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